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ABSTRACT

This study was performed to examine the effectiveness of an experimental anthropology program conducted in a secondary school. A semantic differential scale consisting of ten pairs of bipolar adjectives was administered in pre- and post-test sessions to anthropology students to measure their attitudes toward the following concepts: Culture, Archeology, Indians, Ethnic Backgrounds, Racial Origins, and Organization of Society. Although the differences between pre- and post-test scores were not statistically significant, it is noted that during the post-test session one one-half of the respondents indicated that their attitudes toward persons of other races and cultural backgrounds had become more tolerant and respectful. The findings indicate that the anthropology program appears to be a worthwhile program in fulfilling its objectives and meeting the needs of the students. A summary of student responses to a questionnaire and the scale for measuring students' attitudes are contained in the document. (Author/BB)

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RESEARCH REPORT

An Evaluation of the Experimental Anthropology Program at Magee Secondary School During the Spring Semester of 1973

July, 1973

Allan G. Moodie
Harvie L. Walker
and
Bruce T. Wilson

Research Report 73-18

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND EVALUATION
Board of School Trustees
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AN EVALUATION OF THE EXPERIMENTAL ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM AT MAGEE SECONDARY SCHOOL DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER OF 1973

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of an experimental anthropology program which was conducted at Magee Secondary School during the second semester of the 1972-73 school year. A semantic differential scale consisting of ten pairs of bipolar adjectives was administered in pre- and post-test sessions to Anthropology 11E students for measuring their attitudes toward the following concepts: "Culture", "Archaeology", "Indian", "Ethnic Backgrounds", "Racial Origins", and "Organization of Society". Although the differences between pre- and post-test scores were not large enough to be statistically significant, it is noteworthy that the typical changes in students' attitudes toward these six concepts were consistently in the positive direction.

Responses in the questionnaires which were administered toward the end of the program revealed that the typical student:

- enrolled in the class to learn more about anthropology,
- was interested in studying different cultures,
- expected to learn about life-styles in various cultures and the social customs of different races,
- found the course content to be meaningful,
- gained considerable understanding of various cultures,
- rated the instructional methods and the course "very worthwhile",
- liked, most of all, the simulated "DIG", and
- would like to have more field trips.

From this evaluation the Anthropology 11E program generally appears to be a worthwhile program in fulfilling its objectives as stated by the teacher while meeting the needs and interests of students.

INTRODUCTION

During each Spring semester for the past three years, an experimental anthropology program has been offered as an elective course to senior students at Magee Secondary School. Although some changes in the curriculum have been made each time the course has been presented again, the main purpose has been to introduce students to anthropology and provide them with information on how organized social groups cope with the eternal problems of Man and his environment.

RATIONALE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY PROGRAM

The following rationale for offering anthropology courses to secondary students was developed by the Anthropology Subcommittee of the Curriculum Revision Committee and outlined by Mr. H. L. Walker, Social Studies Department Head of Magee Secondary School.

1. Every society is continually seeking to define itself. For example, an essential distinguishing feature in Canada is that the nation is a composite of ethnic groups; this country has been the promised land for many from overseas. At the same time, these settlers did not come into a cultural or social vacuum; they arrived at a place where highly developed traditional cultures flourished. Canada can be understood only when its complex nature is considered. It is suggested that the task of an anthropology course would be to emphasize the importance of native Indian and Eskimo cultures as they are known in their traditional state. The problems of acculturation, as related to sociology and political science, would form the conclusions of the course.

2. In this fashion, anthropology can be defined as the study of traditional societies. As such, it studies organized human groups solving the eternal problems of man: how to cope with his environment, with himself, and his fellow man; with the relations of the members of the group, with the relations of groups; how to cope with the inevitability of death. All people have to face such problems. This is why anthropology, when properly presented, has relevance and is of exceptional interest.

3. It seems evident that today's students are losing interest in society because they do not understand it and because they do not find their place in it. They must be offered materials that are of vital human interest; and they must be offered intellectual challenge. Since anthropology deals with real people in their real settings, and since it has already developed sophisticated ways of understanding the workings of society, of tradition, and of the human mind, it is potentially one of the most relevant academic fields.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY 11E PROGRAM

As outlined by the teacher, Mr. B. T. Wilson; the major objectives of the anthropology course for the 1972-73 school year were:

1. To teach values that tend to:
   (a) break down stereotypes,
   (b) eliminate or reduce ethnocentrism (i. e. judging other cultures on the bases of values held in one's own culture), and
   (c) help students examine societies objectively.

2. To examine other societies in such a manner that students will become familiar with the methodology of the social scientist and hopefully apply it.

3. To emphasize study of North West Coast culture at its apex and also its problems with acculturation.

OUTLINE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY 11E PROGRAM

PRE-TEST (Semantic Differential)

UNIT 1 Introduction to Anthropology

(January 29 to March 2)
- (a) Aims of the course
- (b) Major divisions of anthropology
- (c) Studying societies using the following tools:
  - (1) Status and Role
  - (2) Kinship
  - (3) Concepts of "Time" and "Space"
  - (4) Universal Truths? How does morality arise?
  - (5) Ethnocentricity - Varying opinions of people.
  - (6) Physical types - Race?
  - (7) Environmental determinism.
  - (8) Language
  - (9) Economy
  - (10) Art

UNIT 2 An Ethnographic Study

(March 5 to March 16) This study was carried out by using several N. F. B. films on the Netsilik Eskimos and two short simulations. Students were required to keep an ethnographer's notebook.

UNIT 3 Archaeology

(March 26 to April 19)
- (a) Origin of Man : Theories
- (b) Leakey's Work in Africa
- (c) Archaeology in our own area

(d) Major simulation - "DIG"[1] - wherein the students were separated into two groups. Each group "invented" a culture with all it's diverse cultural universals. The students manufactured artifacts and "planted" these artifacts. Each group dug up the other's culture using correct archaeological methods and reconstructed it.

UNIT 4 The Pacific Northwest Coast

(April 30 to May 25) A fairly detailed examination of our local Indians using methods learned earlier in the course. Many opportunities for field trips and guest lecturers. Groups studied were:

(a) Tlingit
(b) Haida
(c) Tsimshian
(d) Kwakiutl
(e) Athapascan
(f) Bella Coola
(g) Nootka
(h) Coast Salish
(i) Interior Salish

UNIT 5 Acculturation - The Indian Today

(May 28 to June 15)

(a) A review of ethnocentrism
(b) What are the problems of our native people.
(c) The Indian Act
(d) The Indian "point-of-view" - guest speakers.

POST-TEST (Semantic Differential and Student Questionnaire)

Instead of a single textbook for Anthropology 11E, students used a variety of reference books and materials from:

(a) the Social Studies Resource Centre which has approximately 250 books plus a substantial file of reprints from magazines, newspapers and journals; and

(b) the school library collection from which the librarian had prepared a bibliography of books on anthropology.

Knowledge of anthropology was applied and illustrated in the following three field trips for students to:

---

[1]The simulated "DIG" was based upon the archaeological reconstruction of a vanished civilization by INTERACT, P. O. Box 262, Lakeside, California. 92040.

(a) the Marpole midden to observe and participate in a Vancouver City College "dig",

(b) the Provincial Museum and Thunderbird Park in Victoria to study Northwest Coast culture, and

(c) the Vancouver Centennial Museum to study Northwest Coast culture.

Besides the field trips many films from the Vancouver School Board and the National Film Board also were shown to provide additional information in an illustrative manner.

Additional ideas were provided by Mr. Alvin MacKay from the Indian Education Resources Centre at the University of British Columbia when he was a guest speaker in the Anthropology 11E program. There was also an exchange with Indian Studies students from Columneetza Secondary School at Williams Lake.

A collection of genuine artifacts and replicas which have been donated by interested persons is being formed at Magee Secondary School. Examples of artifacts donated for the collection are arrowheads, stone points, hammer stones and a Kwakiutl skull. Replicas of a fertility goddess, "rosetta" stone, spear point, hammer, and artifacts from the "DIG" simulation are included also in the collection.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PROGRESS

In accord with the philosophy concerning the evaluation of Magee Secondary students in social studies classes (see Appendix C), the teacher used a continuous scheme of assessment with a variety of both subjective and objective criteria. For the final evaluation of Anthropology students, the following formal assignments were used in addition to ratings on school attendance, classroom participation and attitude.

(a) Unit 1 -- in-class essay on culture,
(b) Unit 1 -- multiple-choice examination,
(c) Unit 2 -- ethnographer's notebook assignment describing the Netsilik people,
(d) Unit 3 -- multiple assignments in the simulated "DIG" for a cumulative mark,
(e) Unit 4 -- take-home exam on Northwest Coast culture.
(f) Unit 5 -- newspaper (Akwesasne notes) assignment in form of role playing (writing letters as an Indian and as a member of the Indian Affairs Department). Both letters were marked.
(g) Units 1 to 5 -- take-home essay on Anthropology.

These assignments were related to the teacher's objectives concerning the understanding and application of knowledge in the area of anthropology. Student participation in the simulated "DIG", the field trip to the Vancouver City College "dig" at the Marpole Midden and the ethnographer's notebook assignment promoted the course objective of developing an awareness of the methodologies used by social scientists.

The final standings of Anthropology 11E students appear in Table I.

TABLE I: SUMMARY OF FINAL STANDINGS FOR ANTHROPOLOGY 11E STUDENTS.

	Letter Grades							
	A	B	C+	C	C-	Failed	Dropped Course	Total
Number of Students	5	7	5	4	5	2	5	33

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM

During the first class period of the Anthropology 11E program, Mr. Allan G. Moodie of the Planning and Evaluation Department administered a semantic differential scale (see Appendix B); a technique which was initially developed by Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum[2]. This scale consisting of ten pairs of bipolar adjectives was given to Anthropology 11E students for measuring their attitudes toward the following six concepts: "Culture", "Archaeology", "Indian", "Ethnic Backgrounds", "Racial Origins", and "Organization of Society". These concepts which pervade the study of Anthropology were selected in consultation with the Social Studies Department at Magee Secondary School. High scores received by students in this scale reflect a more positive attitude toward each concept than do low scores. To measure changes in students' attitudes toward these six concepts, the Semantic Differential was administered again toward the end of the Anthropology program.

Table II shows that students' scores for all six concepts are slightly higher on the average in the post-test session than in the pre-test session. Although students exhibited a slightly more positive attitude toward each concept in the post-test administration than in the pre-test administration, the differences in mean scores between the two sessions are not statistically significant. Even though the differences between pre- and post-test scores were not large enough to be statistically significant, it is noteworthy that the changes in students' attitudes toward these six concepts were consistently in the positive direction. Although attitudes are very difficult to measure and evaluate precisely, this research finding lends support to the teacher's objective of developing among his students more tolerant and positive attitudes toward different societies.

Further evidence for this trend is found in item 4 of the student questionnaire (see Appendix A) which was also administered during

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[2] Osgood, C.; Suci, G.; and Tannenbaum, P., The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press), 1957.

TABLE II: ANALYSES BY "t" TEST OF ANTHROPOLOGY 11E STUDENTS' ATTITUDINAL SCORES AS MEASURED BY THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL TECHNIQUE ON SIX CONCEPTS IN PRE- AND POST-TEST SESSIONS

	CONCEPTS			
	"Culture"		"Archaeology"	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Number of Students	22	22	22	22
Mean Score	45.9	48.6	53.0	55.7
Standard Deviation	9.1	10.5	6.8	7.0
Difference Between Means	2.7		2.7	
"t" Value	0.90 (n. s. d.)		1.27 (n. s. d.)	

	CONCEPTS			
	"Indian"		"Ethnic Backgrounds"	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Number of Students	22	22	22	22
Mean Score	48.8	48.9	51.6	52.2
Standard Deviation	9.9	9.6	8.7	7.9
Difference Between Means	0.1		0.6	
"t" Value	0.03 (n. s. d.)		0.23 (n. s. d.)	

	CONCEPTS			
	"Racial Origins"		"Organization of Society"	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Number of Students	22	22	22	22
Mean Score	50.4	52.9	30.3	36.4
Standard Deviation	7.6	7.0	8.4	11.2
Difference Between Means	2.5		6.1	
"t" Value	1.13 (n. s. d.)		2.01 (n. s. d.)	

the post-test session when one-half of the respondents indicated that their attitudes toward persons of other races and different cultural backgrounds had become more tolerant and respectful.

The responses to the questionnaire in Appendix A reveal trends that the typical student:

- enrolled in the class to learn more about anthropology,
- was interested in studying different cultures,
- expected to learn about life-styles in various cultures and the social customs of different races,
- found the course content to be meaningful,
- gained considerable understanding of various cultures,
- rated the instructional methods and the course "very worthwhile",
- liked, most of all, the simulated "DIG", and
- would like to have more field trips.

CONCLUSIONS

From this evaluation one may conclude that the Anthropology 11E program generally appears to be a worthwhile program in fulfilling its objectives as stated by the teacher while meeting the needs and interests of students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The two major suggestions from students that should be considered for future Anthropology courses are:

(a) more field trips, and
(b) more emphasis on contemporary societies and cultures.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Planning and Evaluation Department gratefully acknowledges the cooperation and assistance received from:

Mr. J. A. Mundie, principal of Magee Secondary School

Mr. H. L. Walker, Head of the Social Studies Department at Magee Secondary School, and

Mr. B. T. Wilson, teacher of the Anthropology 11E program at Magee Secondary School.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ANTHROPOLOGY 11E PROGRAM

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE ANTHROPOLOGY 11E PROGRAM

This questionnaire is designed to obtain your opinion of the experimental course entitled Anthropology 11E. The results of the questionnaire will not be used for marks or grading purposes. The questionnaire was developed by the Vancouver School Board Department of Planning and Evaluation to assess students' reactions toward the course.

As the response to the questionnaire is intended to be anonymous, you need not sign your name. Please be forthright in your answers to these questions.

1. Why did you decide to enroll in the Anthropology 11E program?

Wanted to learn more about Anthropology--14
Interested in studying different cultures and how people react to their environment--13
Needed another interesting elective course to complete school program--12

2. What did you expect to gain from taking this course?

Knowledge about various cultures, life-styles, ethnic backgrounds, and social customs of different races -- 23
Credit for graduation -- 2
Personal enjoyment -- 1

3. How meaningful was the content of this course to your needs and interests?

Meaningless 0
Not Very Meaningful 0
Moderately Meaningful 14 (58%)
Very Meaningful 6 (25%)
Extremely Meaningful 4 (17%)

Please comment:

Gained considerable knowledge and understanding of various cultures -- 15
Some sections of the course were interesting whereas other aspects which had been studied previously in other Social Studies courses were not interesting -- 5
Did not achieve very much as a considerable amount of work and discussion is required from students -- 2
Preferred to explore more areas (i. e. interpreting more cultures and their remains) -- 1
No Response -- 1

4. Has this course changed your attitude toward persons of other races and different cultural backgrounds?

Yes 12 (50%)
No 12 (50%)

If your answer is "yes", please describe how your attitude has changed.

Gained more tolerance and respect for the opinions and life-styles of other societies--12

5. How do you rate the method(s) of presentation?

Poor 0
Below Average 2 (8%)
Adequate 7 (29%)
Between Adequate and Very Worthwhile 1 (4%)
Very Worthwhile 14 (58%)
Outstanding 0

Please comment.

Positive Comments
Films were interesting--5
Simulated dig provided an understanding of archaeology--3
Field trips were interesting--2
Variety in the course maintained student interest--2
A large amount of time was spent on learning--2
Occasions when students were left to their own resources were good--2
Discussions were interesting--1
Archaeology, Eskimo and Indian sections were well presented--1

Negative Comments
Some written and oral presentations by the teacher should be more structured -- 4
The following sections of the course did not maintain student interest (i.e. lectures -- 1; films -- 1; discussion -- 1; and simulated dig -- 1)
More time is needed to cover the course topics thoroughly -- 3
Course material should be made more relevant for students -- 1
Teacher is overloaded with work -- 1

6. All in all, how worthwhile was this course for you?

A Waste of Time 0
Not Very Worthwhile 1 (4%)
Adequate 6 (25%)
Between Adequate and Very Worthwhile 3 (13%)
Very Worthwhile 13 (54%)
Outstanding 1 (4%)

Please comment

Gained knowledge about other cultures--17
Learned to be more tolerant in judging other cultures--3
Prefer to study more cultures instead of a few cultures in detail--2
Should study our society and other cultures which are familiar to students before examining cultures that are unfamiliar to students--1
Topics were not interesting--1
Teacher is well qualified -- 1
No response--1

7. What did you like most about the course?

Archaeological simulated dig--12
Section on the Netsilik Eskimos (with films from the National Film Board)--9
Field trips (i. e. to the Marpole excavation site)--7
Relaxed atmosphere and freedom to learn in a class with an interested teacher--6
Films on different societies and cultures (i. e. Dr. Leakey and his excavations)--3
Visiting Indian students--2
Section on Northwest Coast studies -- 1
Section on traditional cultures -- 1
Conceptions of different cultures (i. e. time and space concepts)--1
Enjoyed everything except the simulated dig--1

8. What did you like least about the course?

Four students in the class either did not answer this question or indicated that they had no dislikes. The following summarized comments were made by the remaining twenty students:

Archaeological simulated dig required more preparation by students--6
Excessive notes--3
Discussion--2
Assigned essay--1
Test--1
Some films were not worthwhile (though others were interesting)--1
Chalk talks were repetitive at times--1
Listening to lectures--1
Reading about cultures in books--1
Method of teaching--1
Too much freedom--1

Archaeology section -- 1
Study of prehistoric man with the complicated names -- 1
Study of roles and their status in society (required more thorough coverage) -- 1
Lecture on kinship relationships -- 1
Origins and cultures of distant tribes were not significant -- 1
Study of the Mbuti people -- 1
Section on the Bushman of the Kalahari Desert and the pygmies -- 1

9. What suggestions can you make for the improvement of the Anthropology course?

Five students did not make any suggestions for improving the Anthropology 11E program. The remaining nineteen students made the following comments:

More field trips -- 8
More emphasis on our own contemporary society and culture -- 4
Minimize teaching from prepared materials -- 2
Fewer notes -- 2
More definite notes -- 1
Less evaluation -- 2
Develop a few challenging tests and essays but no large project -- 1
More films -- 2
Fewer films -- 2
Show the film "Chariots of the Gods" -- 1
More guest speakers -- 1
Organize some seminars -- 1
More class discussion -- 1
Less discussion -- 1
More exchange groups -- 1
Continue "create your own culture" project -- 1
Organize clearly the course outline -- 1
Improve the preparation of the archaeological simulation dig -- 1
More emphasis on interpreting the remains of a culture -- 1
More general information on cultures -- 1
More emphasis on the native tribes of British Columbia and Canada -- 1
Study the Australian aborigines and other primitive people -- 1
Course should be included in the regular curriculum -- 1
Course should be longer -- 1
Limit the class enrolment for students who have a genuine interest in Anthropology -- 1
Allow more student initiative -- 1

APPENDIX B

SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE FOR MEASURING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES

(This scale was used to measure students' attitudes toward the following concepts: "Culture", "Archaeology", "Indian", "Ethnic Backgrounds", "Racial Origins", and "Organization of Society")

sick	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ healthy
pleasing	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ displeasing
interesting	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ boring
ugly	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ beautiful
happy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ sad
good	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ bad
hazy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ clear
meaningful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ meaningless
relaxed	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ tense
likeable	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____ dislikeable

APPENDIX C

A STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY CONCERNING THE EVALUATION OF MAGEE SECONDARY STUDENTS IN SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSES

MAGEE SECONDARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

A Statement On Evaluation Of Students In Social Studies Classes

In keeping with statements made in the Provincial Government curriculum guide, and in accordance with the stated policy of the Vancouver School Board, the following apply in evaluating students in Social Studies classes in Magee Secondary School.

1. The process of evaluation is continuous.
2. The evaluation is based upon a variety of criteria, both subjective and objective.
3. A variety of evaluative techniques is used, for example
   a) unit tests
   b) quizzes
   c) "closed-book", "open-book" and "take-home" assignments and tests.
   d) group projects and presentations.
   e) individual projects and presentations.
   f) field study reports.
   g) contributions to class discussion.
   h) class conduct
   i) punctuality and presence
   j) willingness to use class time profitably.
   k) evidence of depth thinking and critical thinking
   l) involvement in class and course activities.

Evaluation serves the following basic purposes.

1. It helps the student determine his/her level of skills acquisition, his/her knowledge of a particular body of information and his/her value position on particular value issues.

2. It assists the teacher in identifying student weaknesses and strengths in the area of skills, content and means of dealing with value questions.

3. It assists the student in making tentative conclusions about his/her possible success in various future endeavours.

Evaluation in the above context therefore is seen as basically a diagnostic process rather than as a sorting process and as an individual matter rather than class or grade matter. It therefore follows that letter grades represent an assessment of the student's total course input and cannot be stated in terms of percentages nor be applied to a "normal distribution of marks curve". Emphasis is upon the improvement, effort and involvement of individual students.

J. A. Mundie, Principal.

H. L. Walker, Department Head, Social Studies.